RECORD OF MEETING OF

THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION

March 4, 1953

Members Present:

Edgar Fuller, Chairman	National Council of Chief State School Officers
David Henry	American Council on Education
James H. Denison — Russ Hackery	Association of Land Grant Colleges and Universities
Franklin Dunham	Association for Education by Radio-Television
Seymour Siegel	National Association of Educational Broadcasters
Belmont Farley	National Education Association

Members Absent:

Albert N. Jorgensen	National Association of State Universities

Also Present:

Ralph Steetle	Executive Director, JCET
Paul Reed	Assistant Director, Field Services, JCET
Blanche Crippen	Assistant Director, Public Information, JCET
Walter Emery	Special Consultant, JCET
Arthur Hungerford	Engineering Consultant, JCET
Eunice C. Parker	Business Representative, American Council on Education
Telford Taylor	JCET Counsel
Seymour Krieger	JCET Counsel

The meeting convened at 9:15 A. M. The group approved an agenda submitted by the Executive Director, which included the following items:

I. Status Report by the Director

II. Policy Determinations:

A. What are the priorities for JCET action for the period April 1-June 2, 1953?

1. Legal steps for extension of the "closed season" on educational reservations.

2. Emphasis to be placed upon areas where activity is now going on.

3. Emphasis to be placed on areas lacking in evidence of progress.

4. Activities to promote greater awareness of educational television by educators, general public

B. Priorities for JCET action June 2, 1953-March 31, 1954.

III. New Business

IV. Executive Session, Budget and Personnel Matters.

The Executive Director reported that 23 applications for educational television stations have been filed, counting the Michigan State College application. Construction of stations is under way in Los Angeles, California; Houston, Texas, and East Lansing, Michigan. Applications are expected to be filed soon by groups in Detroit, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Boston, Philadelphia and Jacksonville, Florida. Applications are also being prepared by the University of Illinois, Ohio State University and the University of Michigan.

Steetle reminded the group that recent state-wide meetings in California, Minnesota, Washington state, Oregon and Rhode

Island would probably result in applications from groups in those states.

Steetle made the following analysis in regard to the recent majority report by Governor Dewey's Commission on Educational Television:

> Educators may become less dependent upon legislative support and may give more attention to obtaining funds from other sources; they may also resolve their minor differences in order to maintain a unity of purpose in utilizing their television channels. As a result of the negative report of the New York State Commission, other states may revise present plans for state support, and at least explore the possibility of local or regional support.

Steetle reported that The Fund for Adult Education has expressed confidence in the work of the Committee. There is an increasing liaison between the JCET and the newly organized Program Center. The JCET also works closely with the National Citizens Committee for Educational Television.

Steetle requested the Committee's thinking in determining priority action for JCET for the next few months. Should we (1) direct our efforts to assisting groups who are almost ready to go, (2) stimulate action in smaller communities or (3) strive for a compromise between these two approaches?

In summary, Steetle mentioned that the annual rate of spending had been $180,000 during the last few months. The staff needs

definite direction in regard to activities in order to plan in terms of funds and personnel required.

The group discussed the implications of the New York State report in connection with the national case for educational television.

Henry asked if separate educational groups might apply for New York's reserved channels. (New York City groups are interested in doing this.) Taylor replied that the Board of Regents might be reluctant to release the licenses to local groups.

After some discussion, the Committee agreed that it would be appropriate for educational groups in New York City, upon making arrangements with Commissioner Wilson, to request the Board of Regents to transfer the construction permit now held by the Board of Regents to a legally constituted group of New York City educators.

Arthur Hungerford reported on his participation in the preparation of the New York State Commission's minority report. Both the Citizens Committee and the JCET assembled material and provided staff members to consult with Norman Goetz of the minority group.

The committee discussed the position of the JCET in regard to any plan for the utilization of New York State's educational channels which differs from the Regent's plan.

Taylor commented that although support of other than the Regent's plan carried with it an element of risk, it might be desirable for the JCET to do so. He suggested, however, that we proceed with caution to avoid any misunderstanding between us and the Board of Regents.

Henry remarked that the failure of the Regent's plan simply reflected a typical legislative point of view - to be wary of a "paper plan" that carried with it no record of experience by educators in the field of television. New York State, unlike several other states, has not conducted experiments in educational television, and, therefore, has no tangible evidence to back up a request for a ten-station network.

The DuMont Challenge

A representative of the DuMont Network has invited the JCET to use DuMont Network facilities in demonstrating educational television. The network has offered to provide Class "A" time for a series of educational programs. The group agreed that the JCET staff within its resources should meet this challenge by following two courses of action: (1) Encourage a successful program series now being conducted by a school system to be accepted for network presentation; (2) Request networks to schedule discussions on educational television on popular commercially sponsored programs, for instance, "The Author Meets the Critics," "Meet the Press," "Georgetown Forum," and others.

The June 2 Deadline

Krieger stated that, in his estimation, a general extension of the deadline was inevitable for some classes of filings, but not necessarily for commercial applications for reserved channels. He thought the chances about even that they would be included. The FCC may issue some sort of statement in connection with channels applied for or in hearing status within the next two or three weeks. During a thirty-day period following such an announcement the FCC would receive comments from interested parties.

Krieger advised the Committee to prepare a statement of a general nature, requesting an over-all extension. He emphasized that any statement should include the general status of education - the shortage of teachers, overcrowded conditions, lack of funds, etc., emphasizing the fact that educators usually take a great deal of time to meet normal educational problems. Decisions regarding the use of television, therefore, should be made without the pressure of an arbitrary time limit.

Emery mentioned that approximately 650 applications for TV stations will be involved in hearings before the Commission. The FCC will probably initiate a delay to set up hearing proceedings. Although the FCC may not suggest a general extension of the June 2 deadline for education, it would be appropriate for JCET to file comments in connection with any general delay.

Taylor advised the Committee that a formal statement is necessary to prevent the "chipping away" of even a small percentage of the educational reservations. He advised that the statement be prepared at once and in an adaptable form so it can be used in any way that becomes necessary.

The motion was made by Henry, and seconded by Dunham, that the JCET go on record as favoring an extension of the June 2, 1953 date for filing of petitions requesting the deletion of educational reservations, and that the Committee request the staff to prepare recommendations as to the time of the announcement and the nature of the plan; that the Committee request the staff to initiate the necessary preparation for making a showing. The motion passed unanimously.

Siegel reviewed the development of educational television from the time of the organization of the JCET and recommended that a more militant approach be adopted in order to bring about public understanding and support of educational television. He read a letter to this effect from Mr. Harold Orme of New York who had raised funds for the ad hoc JCET.

There was considerable discussion about the relationship between the JCET and the National Citizens Committee for Educational Television. In order to avoid overlapping of functions, and to clarify the plans of the two groups, the following motion, made by Henry and seconded by Denison, was passed unanimously:

> That the JCET Chairman arrange at the earliest possible moment a joint meeting of the Chairmen of the National Citizens Committee for Educational Television and the JCET, together with selected members of each staff to plan the future services of the two organizations with reference to the months immediately ahead, and to plan for the next fiscal year."

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 P. M. for luncheon at Pierre's.

Afternoon Session

The afternoon session opened with a showing of a film, produced at WNYC, on water pollution, as an example of an educational program. The Committee then went into executive session.

Executive Session

The Committee in executive session determined the allocation of funds within the grant of $145,000 to the JCET.

Recognizing the fact that recent expenditures, while within the current budget, could not be extended for the 1953-1954 fiscal year, the members directed the staff of the JCET to prepare special projects for desirable activities not within the compass of the current budget. Funds could then be sought in support of such projects. An example of such a project would be the provision of demonstration studios and programs such as those presented for the AASA convention in Atlantic City.

The committee suggested that participating organizations securing services from the JCET should be encouraged to contribute toward the financing.

Dates for the next two meetings were set for April 1 (now changed to April 13) and May 6, 1953.

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